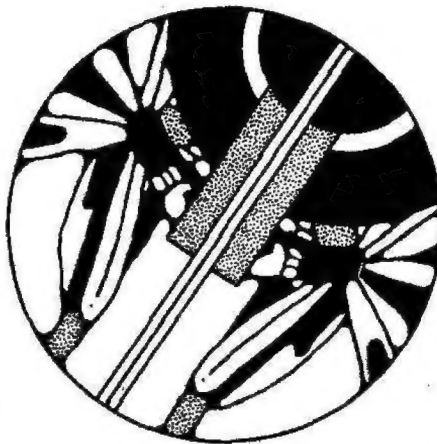


# BiNet News

## THE Bisexual Moment of the Century?

Kris Roehling recently wondered, "What would you consider your biggest, most important, most profound Bisexual Moment of this century?" Her answer to the question is the 1996 Creating Change action by the transgender and bisexual communities.

Lani Ka'ahumanu's three candidate moments are: 1) The pre-March gathering of 75 bisexuals at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC on the morning of the 1987 March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights, when we had a collective epiphany that we were a national bisexual movement, 2) The first National Bisexual Conference in 1990 in San Francisco, which drew 450 people from 20 states and 5 countries, had 82 workshops, a representative from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors presented a plaque which declared June 23 as



Bisexual Pride Day, and over 400 people marched in the Gay and Lesbian Pride Parade, and 3) Getting "Bisexual" in the name of the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation. In the first of these three moments, BiNet USA was conceived. In the second moment, BiNet went into labor. In the third moment, BiNet came of age on the national political scene and proceeded within the next several years to gain an established "place at the table."

Wendy Curry has two moment candidates: 1) The publication of *Bi Any Other Name*, edited by Lani Ka'ahumanu and Loraine Hutchins, which was the first chance that many rural people had to see glimpses of their life, and 2) The creation of the Brown University bisexual listservs, for essentially the same reason. For the first time, people with computer access, regardless of physical location, had an opportunity to meet and interact with other bisexuals and to have a bi community.

Mike Szymanski suggests that the bisexual moment of the century was the International Bisexual Conference in Boston in 1998, which was perhaps the largest single gathering of bisexuals on the planet.

It is up to us to continue the bisexual momentum into the next century!

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BiNet's Mission is to collect and distribute information regarding bisexuality; to facilitate the development of bisexual community and visibility; to work for the equal rights and liberation of bisexuals and all oppressed peoples; and to eradicate all forms of oppression inside and outside the bisexual community. We are committed to being affirmatively inclusive of a multicultural constituency and political agenda.

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Vacant - two positions

BiNet USA has Regional Organizers and Area Organizers. Call (202) 986-7186 or check the BiNet web site ([www.binetusa.org](http://www.binetusa.org)) for the organizer nearest you.

Northeast Region: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island

Tri-State Region: Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York

Mid-Atlantic Region: District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia

Southeast Region: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, and the Virgin Islands

Central Region: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio

South Central Region: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas

Midwest Region: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Missouri, South Dakota, Michigan

Southwest Region: Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah

Northwest Region: Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming

Pacific Coast Region: California, Guam, and Hawaii

NOTE: Some letters refer to BiNet USA's decision to rescind support of ENDA (Employment Nondiscrimination Act) legislation given that the Act's language does not include transgendered people. Although the passing of ENDA could be a step towards our mission of working against oppression, our membership said we will not support legislation that is non-inclusive of gender variance and gender expression.

Dear BiNet USA:

On behalf of myself and the many GLBT people of the State of Michigan, I want to say thanks for the support of the Transgendered.

Karen Eve Liedigk  
"It's Time, Michigan"

Dear BiNet USA:

Way to go!!! Your stand on ENDA is principled. We concur with you wholeheartedly. Thanks for doing the right thing.

Rick Garcia, Director  
Illinois Federation For  
Human Rights  
Chicago, IL

Dear BiNet USA:

Thank you for your validation and support.

Paul Urban  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear BiNet USA:

I am writing to support your principled position regarding ENDA. It seems that as the LGBT liberation movement has gained more ground, it has become more exclusionary. Hopefully, with organizations such as yours standing up for a more principled politics that does not simply cater to the notion that "we are just like everybody else" and hide the various ways that we are, in fact, different, there will be hope for the future of our movement that stretches beyond the needs of white, middle-class gay men and creates an environment of equality and justice for ALL people. Thank you once again for your highly principled stand on this important issue.

Sincerely,  
Brant Berndlmaier

Dear BiNet USA,

I am writing you this letter to let you know that I will be leaving the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) on April 7, 2000. My time with the NGLTF has been glorious. I have worked with a dedicated and brilliant group of staff members and with a committed and effective Board of Directors. I am proud of the work of the Task Force and have complete confidence that our staff and board will continue to grow the organization into the next decade. We have achieved so many specific accomplishments and launched so many wonderful long-term, ongoing initiatives.

Together we've rededicated the organization to its mission of grassroots organizing and movement building. From America's largest cities to smallest towns, NGLTF has proven that a national organization can both lead the movement in new directions and be relevant and accountable to its constituents. And

we've proven that there is no shortage of visionary and committed donors who support our work. With your help, we have really modeled collaboration and cooperation and built so much trust with each other.

I am deeply grateful to each of you for your advice, support and friendship, and I know that this relationship that we have built will be one that NGLTF can continue to count on. The movement for social justice has been my life's work and passion, and so I know that wherever I go, I won't go too far from my NGLTF family. I hope that I can count on you to assist our board and staff in our search for a new executive director for the Task Force. I trust that you will provide a new executive director with the support and many kindnesses that you have always shown toward me. As always, I'll look to you for your continued support of the Task Force as it works to meet the challenges of the new decade. I've been touched by your generosity of spirit, your passion and your dedication to building a strong and vibrant movement that stands for social justice.

Fondly,  
Kerry Lobel  
Executive Director



## Celebrating The Bisexual Family Of Choice

by Gigi Raven Wilbur

The Sheraton Brookhollow Hotel raised the BiPride Flag on their flagpole on Friday October 22, 1999 to kick off the Bisexual Conference. Everyone at the conference felt a special sense of pride seeing our flag in front of the hotel during the entire conference. This was the first conference in our region since 1992 when we had 7 people attend the regional conference in Dallas. Most of the people who attended this years conference (80 people registered) had never been to a bisexual conference before. The love energy soared and everyone learned new information, attended social events, and enjoyed the party activities.

As the organizer, several things stood out for me from the conference. We had several unique programs and set some new records. We brought in the most new members to BiNet USA than any other bi conference in the U.S. At the registration table, we had a sign up sheet for those interested in doing a live radio show from the conference.

When I first proposed the idea of doing a radio show from the conference, Jimmy Carper (Producer of AfterHours, Queer Radio With Attitude, KPFT 90.1 FM) did not think we would have enough material to fill a three

hour show. Not only did we have enough material, but the show turned out to be the most high energy show that we have ever done. This is probably the first time in history that conference attendee's performed a live radio show from a conference.

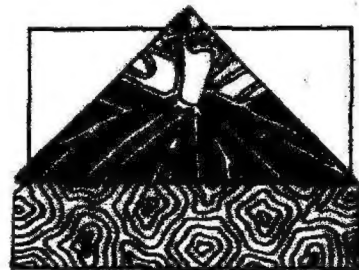
We did do an interview with Mike Skee from the International Conference in Boston, but this show from the Houston conference was unique in that everyone in the conference was invited to sign up for airtime. The staff at AfterHours was impressed with how well the show went and commented that they too felt the high love energy from the conference. This love energy, I am certain, went out on the airways.

We closed the conference with a pagan polyamory hand fasting ritual. J and I have been wanting to exchange our polyamory commitment vows in a pagan ritual for many years, but have waited until we could do it with our bisexual family of choice. It was full of love and magick. Someone told me afterwards, that there was not a dry eye in the room. I have never felt so connected with my bisexual family and with J, as I was during this ritual. It was a very powerful experience for all. The Polyamory Commitment Vows we shared, are posted temporarily at <http://www.bicafe.com/>. They appear at the end of the BiCafe article.

I was amazed at how everyone at the conference left with the feeling of belonging to the bisexual family of choice. From the beginning of the conference till after the last

party at my house, every face I saw was glowing. This one event, has transformed our region from a bunch of isolated bisexual groups and individuals into a family and network. People from all over the region formed bonds and connections which may last a lifetime. It was the most powerful conference that I have ever been to. I was so impressed with everyone who participated, from national speakers, to bi authors, to individuals who came from small rural communities; everyone connected, learned, grew, and became a part of the bi space. It was wonderful.

It is my hope, that other regional conferences will surpass the one we had this past weekend. I also hope that in the future we will surpass others, and then they, us. And on and on. This would be a good barometer of growth for the entire bisexual movement. I believe that we will be seeing tremendous growth in our movement over the next few years. At all levels, local, national and international, I am seeing growth. I certainly saw it here in Houston, Texas, during the conference. We are becoming visible, we are each becoming a integral part of the bisexual global community.

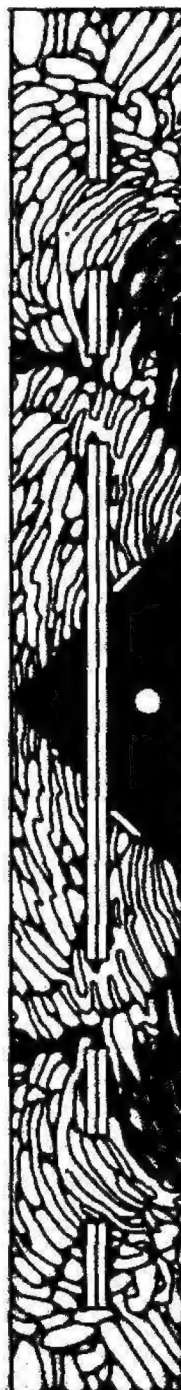


To see photographs of the conference, go to:

[http://www.bisexual.org/past\\_conf/houston/index.html](http://www.bisexual.org/past_conf/houston/index.html)

One important item that resulted from the conference is a project that I am working with Tim Turner and Jim Carper (Producer of AfterHours) to start a web radio AfterHours. AfterHours, Queer Radio With Attitude, 90.1 KPFT Houston features a different segment of the queer community each week. The bisexual show is on the first Saturday of each month. We have just celebrated our fifth anniversary of being on the show. We will be converting master tapes of all the shows from the past five years to digital format and putting them on the Internet. This is in the beginning phase, so I will keep you posted on our progress. Hopefully soon, AfterHours will be available to the community.

For myself, I realized that I have lived too long in isolation from the environment that I belong in. I realized that I do not fit into mainstream society. I thrive when I am in bi space. Bi space is my home and my life. For me, the bisexual community is my family of choice and I am ready to celebrate with my family on a full time basis. It is in the bisexual community that I found a place that I could call home.



## Celebrate Bisexuality Day

by Alice Leibowitz

The first-ever Celebrate Bisexuality Day didn't go as planned for Conn-Bi-Nation, Connecticut's bisexual activist group. The plan, developed in coordination with the BiNetwork of New Jersey, was to go out to dinner, eat a cake which read, "Happy Celebrate Bisexuality Day," and have the restaurant waitstaff sing, "Happy Celebrate Bisexuality Day," to the tune of "Happy Birthday." This was intended to be an easy way to have fun while raising visibility.

We decided to try the Macaroni Grille, a chain Italian restaurant in West Hartford where they let you draw on the tables. To make sure things would go smoothly, Jennifer Haddock, a member of Conn-Bi-Nation, called ahead and asked if we could bring a cake and if they would sing for us. The answer was, "I don't see why not." They said that they sing "Happy Birthday" in Italian, for instance.

The evening started off well. When I first came in, the hostess took the cake away to bring out when we were ready. Members and friends trickled in until there were six of us. Dinner was enjoyable, though a little pricey. We noticed that they really do sing "Happy Birthday" in Italian. We wrote Bi Pride slogans on the paper tablecloths. It was a good time.

Continued on next page

Around 9:30 p.m. we were ready to eat cake and head home. We asked our waiter, who was new that night, if he and the staff would bring it out for us. We asked if he knew what they were supposed to sing, and he replied, "Yes, but I'm not sure I know how to say that in Italian."

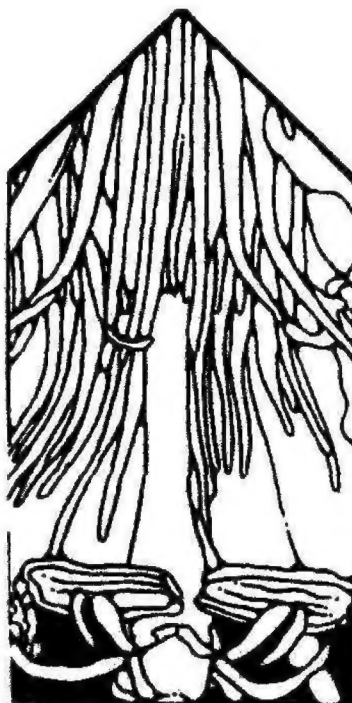
Ten or fifteen minutes later, a middle-aged woman came out of the kitchen looking anxious. She informed us that she was the manager and that she was not allowed to "change the words" to the song they usually sing. She doesn't have a problem with it, her staff doesn't have a problem with it, but central management warns her that she would be in a lot of trouble if the staff sang "Happy Celebrate Bisexuality Day." She tried very hard to make it sound like there was no homophobia or biphobia involved, but it was pretty clear that she knew there was.

We were shocked and disappointed. This was exactly what we had tried to avoid by calling ahead. We were also very angry. Jennifer pointed out that the only reason we came to eat at this restaurant was because they had said on the phone that they would sing for us. Otherwise, we would have called another restaurant. We threatened to organize pickets and a boycott. The manager apologized and looked uncomfortable, but wouldn't budge. "I can't change the words," she kept repeating.

Finally, at one point, she mentioned that sometimes customers sing other songs themselves. That sparked an idea. We asked whether we could sing,

"Happy Celebrate Bisexuality Day," while she held the cake. This turned out to be the compromise that salvaged the situation. The six of us sang, "Happy Celebrate Bisexuality Day," as loud as we could. The manager sang the restaurant's traditional "Good Wishes" song to us immediately afterward. (With passion, I might add; it seemed like she was personally bi-positive but afraid of losing her job). And we ate cake.

Overall, I believe this was a successful event. We were able to celebrate BCD publicly and with friends. We enjoyed our evening out and didn't have to go home angry. Ironically, we may have raised visibility more than we ever planned, by forcing the staff of this restaurant to see just how pervasive biphobia is. We are still unhappy with the Macaroni Grille (and none of us will ever eat there again), but we did accomplish what we set out to do.



## Bisexual Women and Beauty Norms

Virtually no attention has been paid to the ways in which appearance expectations of the dominant culture impact bisexual women. Jennifer Taub has published an article examining how coming out and gender of partner affect bisexual women's behavior, thoughts, and feelings regarding beauty and appearance norms. Seventy-four bisexual women participated in a qualitative survey addressing these issues. Just under half (49%) of respondents felt that coming out as bisexual affected their beauty ideas and practices, and 71% felt that the gender of their partners affected their beauty ideas and practices. Most of the latter group (80%) felt more appearance pressures when involved with men than when involved with women. Article copies are available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-342-9678. Email address: [getinfo@haworthpressinc.com](mailto:getinfo@haworthpressinc.com).

## Tri-State Conference 2000

by Robin Renee

Plans for the BiNet USA Tri-State Regional Bisexual Conference 2000 are underway. The conference is currently slated to be held on the SUNY-Albany Campus in Albany, NY. No details are confirmed as yet, but the tentative date is the weekend including September 23rd, the second annual Celebrate Bisexuality Day. Those interested in helping to organize the conference, or who would like more information may contact David Bishop at the SUNY-Albany Student Activities Office: (518) 442-5640.

## News from BiNet/NJ

by Robin Renee

Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch- Changes! In a word, that's what's up for BiNet/NJ. The group is in the midst of a powerful growth process of expansion and formalization. A mission statement, bylaws, official legal status, and even a new name are all on the table. The regular Tuesday night support group has been canceled until we regroup, discuss, and create a more viable format through which to support our community. We anticipate that a whole new Tuesday night program should begin in February 2000. Our first Tuesday Planning Meetings at the Pride Center of New Jersey in New Brunswick are going on as scheduled. All are

invited to join us as we shape our future. For more info call (732) 246-3769. For directions to The Pride Center, contact (732) 846-2232 or [www.pridecenter.org](http://www.pridecenter.org).

## Leadership Retreat

BiNet/NJ is planning a regional Bi Leadership Retreat for April 2000. Community leaders, potential leaders, and other interested folks are invited to join us for a weekend of workshops, relaxation and fun. Workshops will be geared specifically toward helping us become better leaders, activists, and organizers for the bi community. We will create time to brainstorm and plan for a great year of bi events. The tentative dates are April 14th-16th, with possible locations including a Bed & Breakfast in New Hope, PA, to a rustic retreat center in Marlboro, NJ. All those interested in participating, please call us at (732) 246-3769. Space is limited!

## Other Events

After a very successful Holiday Party on December 10th, many of us are encouraged by the new faces and new energy in the group. We are looking forward to events including a night out together at Norma's Mediterranean Restaurant in Cherry Hill on January 8th, a Poly Dim Sum Brunch on Sunday, January 16th at Hyde Chinese in Greenbrook, and the Billennium! Dance Party at The Den in Somerset on Saturday, February 12th. Check out the web page for the latest: [www.binetnj.org](http://www.binetnj.org).

## South Central News

by Gigi Raven Wilbur

I would like to welcome Jess Meyer and Scott Braunhardt, our two new Regional Organizers for the South Central Region. They were elected to the positions at the business meeting at the regional conference that was held on October 22 - 24, 1999. Jess Meyer is our region's Youth RO and Scott Braunhardt was elected to fill the position vacated by Deborah Dixon.

I would like to say thank you to Deborah Dixon, who has served many years as this region's RO, often serving as the only RO for our region. Deborah Dixon will be heading up the Rural Initiative for BiNet USA.

## Central Region News

by Wendy Curry

Holly Nanette Ferrise is joining us as a Michigan area organizer. She was personally recommended to us by none other than Robyn Ochs. I got to spend some time with Ms. Holly in San Francisco, and I must say she's amazing. Her email address is [nanette@umich.edu](mailto:nanette@umich.edu).



## Stonewall Library & Archives Addresses Bisexuality in its 13th Annual Heritage of Pride

by Michael Page

Stonewall Library & Archives presents its 13th annual Heritage of Pride Oral History Program, "Bisexual: The B in GLBT." It is cosponsored by The BiCafe.com and BiNet USA.

This year's Heritage of Pride features longtime leaders and activists in the national and local bisexual movement. It will be held on Saturday, Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. in the ArtServe Auditorium at 1350 E. Sunrise Blvd. in Fort Lauderdale. Admission is free. Donations appreciated. All proceeds will be evenly split between the Stonewall Library & Archive and BiNet USA.

Plan to come and learn about the history surrounding this facet of life and our movement. The format will include a presentation by our panelists and a question-and-answer session.

### Moderator Michael Page:

Founder of BiCafe.com, designer of the Bi Pride Flag, regional organizer for BiNet USA, a co-founder of Celebrate Bisexuality Day, volunteer speaker on bisexuality for PFLAG and at local universities, and founder/facilitator of BiNet Ft. Lauderdale, a bisexual community-building group.

### Panelist Debra Ruth Kolodny:

Volunteer and professional activist in the faith, labor, social justice, and women's movements and in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities for more than 20 years.

She represents BiNet USA at the NGLTF National Policy Roundtable. She presides as facilitator of the NGLTF/Equal Partners in Faith Religious Leadership Roundtable and is one of the many lay leaders in "Fabrangen Chavura" (independent Jewish community). She serves on the board of the Interfaith Alliance of Montgomery County, and chairs their LGBT task force. In spring 2000, Continuum Press will publish an anthology she edited on Bisexual People of Faith.

She served two terms as a National Coordinator for BiNet USA, founded the first bisexual support group in Philadelphia, published over a dozen articles, trained hundreds on bisexuality, and led the Washington DC BiNetwork and the DC Alliance for Multicultural Bisexuals.

### Panelist Kris Roehling: A

National Coordinator for BiNet USA, and volunteer for OutFront, the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender human rights project of Amnesty International.

She is a former Florida state committee chair for social justice for the Unitarian Universalist Association. She served on the board of the GLB Community Center in Orlando, FL; as visitation director for Hope and Health, an AIDS service organization; and worked as a labor organizer for the Service Employees International Union for health care workers.

**Panelist Luigi Ferrer:** A past president of both the South Florida Bisexual Network and the AIDS Action Council, past Executive Director of the Body Positive Resource Center (Miami), a National Coordinator of BiNet USA. He served on the boards of Lambda Community Center and the Gay and Lesbian Community Center, both in Miami. A former board member of the National Association of People With



AIDS, he is now working to develop a Bisexual Resource Center/Space in Miami.

**Panelist Fred Bertron:** Currently serves on the board of Save Dade.

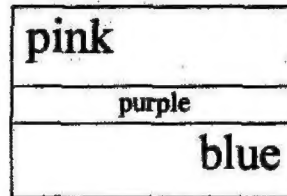
Bertron defines himself as a gay identified bisexual and will bring this perspective to the program. Now in his 30's, he has been out as a bisexual since his teens. He has been active in the bisexual movement in Washington, DC and Miami. He is a former Regional Organizer for BiNet USA's Southeast region.

### Panelist John Graves: A

longtime activist and philanthropist in the GLBT movements. He is active in the leadership of the Stonewall Library & Archives and is a past president of SL&A. He will offer historical perspectives on the vision of universal bisexuality that was professed during the Gay Liberation Front's heyday more than a quarter century ago.

Through its annual Heritage of Pride Oral History Program, Stonewall Library & Archives seeks to compensate for the lack of published material on the history of South Florida's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. By showcasing and preserving the past, as it is remembered by those who lived it, SL&A hopes to increase understanding of the present and help today's GLBT communities focus their action for the future.

Stonewall Library & Archives:  
(954) 561-1982  
Media Contact:  
Allen Naismith (954) 587-9616



### **“The Bi Pride Flag!”**

The Bi Pride Flag (public domain) was unveiled on December 5<sup>th</sup> of 1998 and has made appearances in the United States, Australia, India, Africa, South America and beyond...

Thanks to a grant from the American Institute of Bisexuality, 5' x 3' flags (no limit) may be obtained for any and all established Bi Groups or GLBT Organizations at 10.00 each (retail is 30.00). Offer expires Dec. 31, 1999.

Individuals wishing to purchase the flag may order by phone or online at <http://www.bicafe.com/bimart> . Call Michael Page at (888) 256-2704 before placing the order and receive 5.00 off retail.



### **“The BiCafe!”**

Due by the end of September, re-created BiCafe will bring you the best personals service on the Internet! The best hetero, gay/lesbian, and alternative personals sites have been thoroughly examined. Our new site goes beyond not only “finding your match” but allowing you to easily find other bisexuals interested in Bi Community Building and Political Organizing.

All potential New BiCafe Members, will be given a choice of Bi Organizations they would like to belong to. A one-year membership will be sponsored by The Coffee Club, Inc., parent company of BiCafe, BiMart and BiDreams.

All adult erotic content will be moved to a new web site named BiDreams. All BiCafe members have free seamless access to BiDreams.

Easy Sign up process at <http://www.bicafe.com>

## Here comes BECAUSE 2000!

by Bill Burleson

BECAUSE (Bisexual Empowerment Conference: A Uniting Supportive Experience), the Midwest bi conference, is entering it's 9th consecutive year informing, entertaining and supporting bisexuals, their friends and allies.

The theme this year is "Celebrating Our Stories." The planners of the conference seek to acknowledge and document our history and culture by exploring the personal stories of individual bis, from life-long activists to those now just exploring the sexuality.

BECAUSE believes that every bi person is an equal part of the community, every story is important, and every individual should be valued and celebrated.

As part of "Celebrating Our Stories," the conference will be offering several new programs. First, the Bisexual Organizing Project (BOP), a new organization in the Twin Cities dedicated to creating resources for bisexuals, will be sponsoring the Bisexual History Project, an effort to document our history as a community and as individuals through film and written word. Second, there will be a focus on movies of special interest to bis and highlight the public view of bisexuality. Third, throughout the weekend, speakers from all walks of life will be offering their stories to highlight our diverse history.

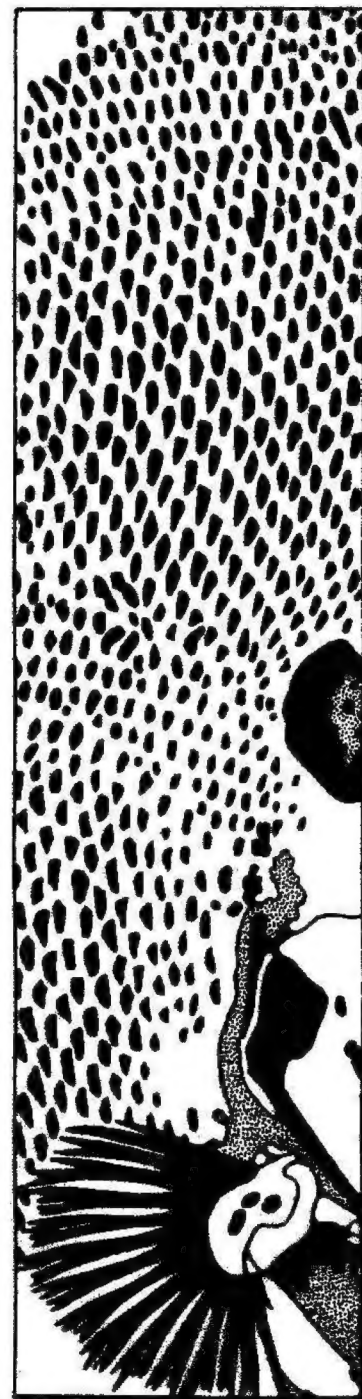
Art will be of greater importance this year, with special guests facilitating projects with an emphasis on the process more than the end product.

But as always, the main part of any BECAUSE will be the workshops and the keynote speakers, and this year will not disappoint. In addition to many workshops to help first time attendees find their voice, there will also be much to interest the more veteran among us, from plenaries about organizing to more advanced workshops of many topics.

Perhaps the most exciting of all, BECAUSE 2000 is announcing this year's two keynote speakers, Carol Queen and Elise Matthesen. Carol Queen is a well-known activist, teacher, and author of "Real Live Nude Girl" and a powerful spokesperson for sex positive culture and "ethical slutting." Elise Matthesen, a home-grown nationally known activist, is a writer and frequent speaker for inclusion for all bisexuals, and has been the spiritual matriarch of BECAUSE from the beginning.

To be held April 7, 8 and 9 at Metro State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, it also may be the last for a while as BECAUSE moves to Milwaukee for 2001. Activists in the Twin Cities and Milwaukee felt that since BECAUSE is a regional conference, it was time to let other cities have a chance to be host. With the strong bi community in Milwaukee, all can rest assured that it is in good hands.

All that being said, BECAUSE 2000 promises to be bigger, have more diverse programs, and truly "Celebrate Our Stories" as never before!



## Birch Supports Bi/Trans Inclusion in Mission Statement

Elizabeth Birch, Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), publicly acknowledged that she favors adding 'transgender' and 'bisexual' to HRC's mission statement. HRC is the nation's largest gay and lesbian advocacy organization, and any change in their mission, a topic hotly debated by bi- and trans-activists for years, could signal an important shift in the organization's emphasis and constituency.

What effect her thoughts about inclusion will have in persuading HRC's Board of Directors to amend the mission statement remains unknown. The Board passed a 1998 resolution acknowledging the bisexual and transgender communities as "friends and allies," but it stopped well short of acknowledging them as part of HRC's primary constituency.

Said David Smith, HRC Communications Director, "Many people on staff share Elizabeth's view on inclusion as do many people on our board. There is without question an ongoing discussion within the organization as HRC continues to grow and evolve."



## Vermont Begins to Pave the Way for Same-Sex Couples

The December 20 decision by the Vermont Supreme Court that the state must provide the benefits of marriage to same-sex couples is a ground-breaking ruling that represents a seminal shift in the way gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered families forever will be viewed, according to an NGLTF press release.

"The court's decision is unique in that it commands that the state give same-sex couples every benefit and protection that it currently provides to married couples," said Paula Ettelbrick, attorney and Family Policy Director at the NGLTF Policy Institute. "The decision is a significant step forward for our community and makes Vermont the second state Supreme Court to

rule that the Constitution protects our relationships.

"However, by stopping short of fully recognizing the freedom to marry, the court has opened the door to complete equality but has not constitutionally guaranteed it. Now the battle progresses to the Vermont Legislature," Ettelbrick continued. "We have the opportunity as a community to convince lawmakers to provide the full badge of citizenship by recognizing the freedom to marry."

Ettelbrick noted that Vermont is a logical state to become the first to recognize same-sex civil marriage. It was the first state to offer domestic partner benefits to state workers, one of the first states to recognize second-parent adoptions and one of the first states to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.

But Ettelbrick warned that Vermont's landmark court decision may now fall squarely within the crosshairs of religious extremists who will step up efforts to demonize the Supreme Court and denigrate GLBT family values. "We expect a backlash and will be prepared to protect the safety and sanctity of GLBT families on the streets, in the courts and in the Vermont Legislature," Ettelbrick said.

## Thank You for Creating Change

by Stephanie Berger

As many of you remember at this year's annual meeting in Phoenix, I vowed to throw a kick ass reception/fundraiser at Creating Change. Well, it happened, and I can now quietly slip into retirement (yeah, right.)

But seriously, it was a huge success. We raised about \$1,300. After expenses, we will have made close to \$900.

I want to thank Michael Page, Barry Saiff, Mickey Skee, Cianna Stewart, Carol Queen, Naomi Tucker, East Bay Pride, Blacksheets, Good Vibrations,

Jack Random, Jackie and Shar of "Bend Over Boyfriend" fame, Robyn Ochs, Marc Silver, Lani Ka'ahumanu, the BRC, Swingmaster Jason, and Tarita for generously donating items for our silent and not so silent auction. Oh! And Annie Sprinkle, but I was never able to hook up to pick up her donations. Next time.

We were entertained by Bay Area bi folk and one honorary bi folk. I want to thank our performers Swing Out, Linda Susan and the Fabulous Babes, Rob Yaeger, Jack Random, Carol Queen and my fabulous hostess with the mostest Cherry Cordial and swing goddess aka Cianna Stewart.

I also want to thank Cherry and Shadow Morton for graciously offering to go on a dinner date which was auctioned for \$200 to

the very lucky Carol Queen. And I want to thank Kris for bidding \$25 dollars to remove 2 Warrior game tickets from my sweaty cleavage with her teeth.

All in all I think it was success in also expressing the range and fluidness of bi culture and community. We had several of our allies from NGLTF attend, as well as new and old friends.

Bi Boy extraordinaire, Keith Bowers, was snapping photos. I also want to thank Keith for recruiting many of our performers and auction items. For all of you who were there, thank you. And for all of you who generously donated, thank you again!



## Bisexual Wordy Gurdy by "Natalie Shoemacher"

Fill in the blanks with the rhyming answer to each clue. Then, unscramble the letters in the parentheses to solve the Wordy Gurdy. Have fun!

1. throttle Billie Jean

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

2. singer David's baby kangaroos

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

3. pretty (in Scotland) Kaahumanu

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Ndegocello's beach souvenirs

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

5. use ASL for Fritz

( ) \_\_\_\_\_

6. trap a Blondie song

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Mercury's lingerie items

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

8. statutes for what the Rebel had not

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

9. the allure of Paglia

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

10. Hudson's hosiery

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Wordy Gurdy: a bisexual bard

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

## Bisexuals Create Change

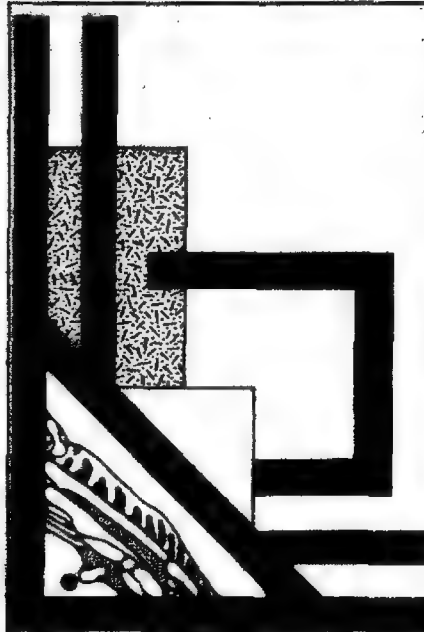
By Michael Szymanski

Bisexual leaders and activists helped spark some of the most exciting events at the 12th Annual Creating Change Conference in Oakland, which was the largest gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans activist conference ever assembled (with more than 2,000 participants).

Not only was bisexual Kerry Lobel, (executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force), introducing activists to her bi friends, but bi activist Lani Ka'ahumanu is on the board of directors, former national leader Stephanie Berger was on the media committee and bi sex author Dr. Carol Queen shocked some of those more stuffy panelists at a keynote plenary by spouting some of her more risqué witticisms.

"I was probably the first person on the plenary to talk about sex and fucking," Queen said later about the "Politics is a Many Gendered Thing" session. She certainly opened up some eyes.

National leaders in the bisexual movement lead many workshops: Marcella Bucknam from Omaha and Terri Ann Johnson led "Bisexuality: The Phantom Menace" with Wendy Curry, a new BiNet USA National Coordinator; Lani led her "Safe Sex Sluts" seminar as well as "Queer History of the Bay Area"; Deborah Kolody, from Maryland, led "When Gender and Sexual Orientation are Fluid" and Boston author Wayne Bryant and activist Buzz Harris from Boston led "Why Bisexual? Can't We Just all be Queer Men?"



The Los Angeles chapter of BiNet was featured in Special Session in a seminar I was asked by the national NGLTF leadership to present. We called it "Creating an Anti-Conference" and I presented the positive and negative experiences of doing BAFFLED, our Bisexual Arts, Film Festival, Literature, Entertainment & Drama. There was a great attendance, and many activists want to do something similar in their own territories, including a national queer youth conference scheduled next year in Santa Barbara which I will help out with. It seems that most of the young people at the conference identified as Bisexual, and want to keep up that momentum, but don't feel the existing groups meet their needs. Hopefully, with some understanding and sensitivity all around we can work together to provide activities for all ages.

I was also invited to sit in on the panel of the heated Queer Men/Bisexual panel, and that erupted into some angry sore point by gay men who felt that bisexual male inclusion wasn't fair. But, we got our points made, and once again, the youth in the capacity crowd of the room were mostly on our side,

agreeing that we are as much a part of the Queer movement as bi men as the gay men are.

Finally, the most exciting part of the conference was the demonstration that was also sparked by our very own bisexual national coordinator Tim Turner. Tim was out with friends when he saw a transgendered woman who was the victim of a beating. An Oakland police officer responding to the attack said, "I am tired of having to do all this paperwork. Who has to do the paperwork? Me, that's who."

Tim immediately wrote down all the information and filed a complaint and by Saturday evening, 1,500 activists marched on the police station. While in my cast, I hobbled with the wheelchair brigade along with Robert Lawrence and Carol Queen as we chanted slogans. Robert was talking about the days he recalled marching against the police station during past protests, and he kept an eye out for any potential danger.

Stephanie Berger and Tim Turner made the news that night, and Kerry Lobel said, "What happened last night is a classic case of blame the victim. Transgendered people are not paperwork."

Bisexuals held a fundraiser and a dance, as well as a few other socials during the four-day event. There were poetry readings, singing, an auction of a date with sexy bi couple Cianna Stewart and Shadow Morton and much more. To find out more about Creating Change (which will be held next year in Atlanta) or the NGLTF, go to their website at: <http://www.nglftf.org>.

## Philanthrofund Establishes Bisexual Resources Fund

by Bill Burleson

I talked with Philanthrofund director Kit Waickman about the big bucks for bi's and what this might mean for the bi communities.

**Bill:** Kit, first of all tell us a little about Philanthrofund.

**Kit:** Philanthrofund was founded in 1987. Four Twin Cities gay men wanted to create a way for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) individuals to leave their wealth to their "family of choice" - the GLBT community. Now 12 years later, Philanthrofund Foundation provides the means for individuals to name a GLBT specific foundation in their wills and life insurance policies. Individuals can give cash, stocks, bonds and other assets to the foundation, knowing that Philanthrofund will use those funds to respond to the changing needs in the GLBT and allied communities now and in the years to come.

Philanthrofund Foundation is like other community foundations, such as The Minneapolis Foundation or The Saint Paul Foundation. The difference is that Philanthrofund Foundation focuses exclusively on serving the GLBT and allied communities. Philanthrofund serves the GLBT and allied communities by making grants to nonprofit organization that serve the GLBT and allied communities in Minnesota, Iowa, and North and South Dakota; providing technical assistance to and building capacity within GLBT communities; and educating donors and other grant makers about the needs for GLBT specific funding.

The foundation made its first grants in 1989, giving away \$2,100. Since then, the Philanthrofund has awarded over \$100,000 to more than 100 organizations. Now, Philanthrofund has taken a national leadership position by establishing the Bisexual Resources Fund - the only endowed fund in the nation dedicated exclusively to supporting the bisexual community.

**Bill:** How did the Bi Resource Fund originate?

**Kit:** In early 1998, the bi-fund donor approached Philanthrofund. He had two goals. First, he wanted to create a fund that specifically would support education, awareness and understanding of bisexual issues. Second, he was keenly aware of how many individuals are closeted bisexuals - whether closeted from their straight friends and colleagues or their gay and lesbian friends and colleges. He wanted to create something so exciting that individuals would feel compelled, at the very least, to identify themselves as bisexual or bi-supportive through their philanthropy. They could be out or remain closeted, but their philanthropy would support the bi-community.

So the donor created both a base of support and a challenge grant. First, he donated \$25,000 to establish the Bisexual Resources Fund. Second, he created a challenge for the community. Raise \$25,000 by June 2000 and he will donate a second \$25,000, bringing the fund's total amount to \$75,000. The challenge portion of the gift is a direct challenge to the bisexual community to come to the table, financially support the fund and engage in public bi-identified philanthropy.

**Bill:** How has the fundraising planning been organized so far? Has it been done entirely by

Philanthrofund, or has the community been involved?

**Kit:** The bisexual activist community has been leading the fund raising efforts. A group of people has been meeting virtually every other week to strategize on how to meet the match. Individuals are asking their friends and acquaintances to donate to the fund. The challenge grant leverages \$2 for every \$1 donated.

Philanthrofund's Board of Directors is supporting the Fund both through their time and through money. Three Philanthrofund board members are sitting on the fund raising committee and board members have pledged more than \$3,000. The board members' pledges to the Bisexual Resources Fund are above and beyond their annual gift to Philanthrofund.

**Bill:** So when the fund is in place, how will decisions be made as to who get the grants? Also, What kind of organizations will be eligible? For example, Minnesota AIDS Project (MAP) is a "GLBT" organization. Would just having a "B" in the name of a group qualify them?

**Kit:** The donor has stipulated that Philanthrofund cannot begin to make grants from the Bisexual Resources Fund until we meet the \$25,000 challenge grant. Right now, we are concentrating on raising the money. Once we meet the \$25,000 goal, the individuals who have been working on the fundraising will create an action plan to define the funding criteria and structure. The only restriction is that we adhere to the donor's intentions to use the fund to support education, awareness and understanding of bisexual issues.

I anticipate that defining what constitutes a "bisexual" project will be very similar to an issue that we surfaces every grant round - how to define a "GLBT" project. MAP is

actually a very good example. Philanthrofund firmly believe that HIV/AIDS does not equal GLBT and GLBT does not equal HI/AIDS. So, when MAP applies to Philanthrofund, they must demonstrate how their grant is going to benefit the GLBT community. The rigorous grant review process usually delineates which projects benefit the GLBT community directly and which do not.

Like other foundations granting to minority populations, I anticipate that the grant criteria for the Bisexual Resource Fund will ask the grant applicant to demonstrate bisexual involvement and leadership.

**Bill:** Is fear that when Philanthrofund has the Bi Fund in place, the usual endowment, marked for GLBT concerns, will become GLT. In other words, will bisexuals with their own fund no longer get grants the original fund?

**Kit:** The existence of the Bisexual Resource Fund creates a minimum amount that Philanthrofund must distribute to bisexual organizations/projects each year. It does not create any sort of maximum amount!

**Bill:** How has it been working with the Bi community for you? Has it been what you've expected?

**Kit:** It has been much more exciting and dynamic than I expected. Working on the Bisexual Resources Fund Challenge has been some of the most exciting and challenging fundraising work in my life. It's been an honor to work with individuals from the bisexual community who are so passionate about their beliefs. I have learned an amazing amount about my own biphobia and about the diversity within the local bisexual community.

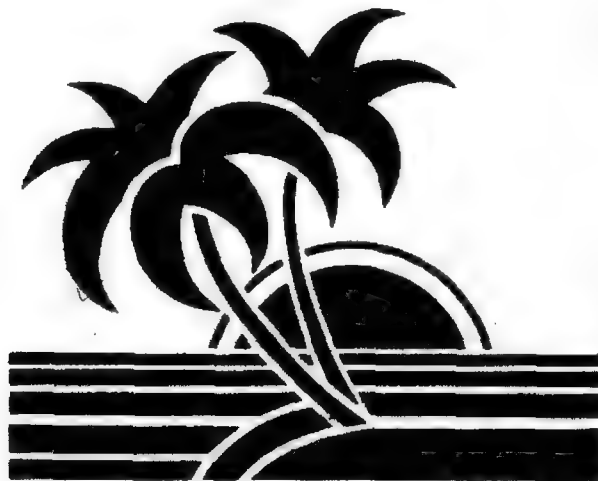
I am continuing to struggle with how to engage bisexual individuals who

do not connect with the bisexual activist community. I know there are hundreds of folks out there who are bisexual that we are not reaching.

**Bill:** What does Kit Waickman do for fun on her time off?

**Kit:** Right now, I am concentrating on trying to get the trim on our house sanded and painted before the snow flies. I work out, read, and hang out with my family: my partner, Ann; our two dogs, Charlie and Scully; and our turtle, Ronan.

If you have a contribution for or questions about the Bisexual Endowment Fund, please contact: Philanthrofund, 310 East 38th Street #204, Minneapolis, MN 55409



## Draft Diversity Position Paper

by GiGi Raven Wilbur

To accomplish the mission of BiNet USA and build diversity within BiNet and within the greater society, there are several important concepts that need to be explored. With the advent of a complex, information age social order, the need to make informed choices about major life decisions becomes increasingly important. Yet, we all live in an oppressive society which is economically stratified on a set of criteria that appears to be arbitrarily set by the system. Different values are placed on different professions without much rhyme or reason. We pay someone in sports exorbitant amounts while allotting professional educators a mere pittance of a salary.

This further adds to the need for people to make informed life choices on a wide variety of major life decisions. Education is a key to making this a possibility. Brainstorming and exploring alternative options is key to making informed choices. Choice implies that there is more than one option. Informed Choice is also a key to freedom.

Below are a few issues on diversity. For those interested in the complete position paper, contact Gigi Raven Wilbur at [bihouse@flash.net](mailto:bihouse@flash.net) or P.O. Box 667041, Houston, TX 77266. For those interested in contributing to the position paper on diversity, you are welcome to join the discussions by joining the listserv through the link: [bi-versity-subscribe@onelist.com](mailto:bi-versity-subscribe@onelist.com) or contacting me via snail mail at the address above.

### Economic Diversity -

BiNet USA has a long history of offering services to individuals without discriminating on the basis of an ability to pay. Every effort is made to provide access to all people with a sensitivity to economic stratification which exists in our society.

Within the next year, I will be developing a new program which will go one step further. The program will offer tools for individuals to be able to mobilize themselves in a stratified economic society. These tools include vocational development and counseling, and job placement services with sensitivity to placement in queer/queer friendly companies. The vocational development and counseling services will include a component on accessing resources for education/training and personal career development.

Within the next year, I will be developing a web page specifically for businesses which are GLBT owned or GLBT friendly to post employment opportunities in a central GLBT job board, organized on a city by city listing structure.

### Cultural and Racial Diversity

BiNet USA is welcoming of all people of color and people from diverse cultures. BiNet USA is actively seeking people of color for leadership roles within the organization at all levels. We are also seeking people of color who would like to work on the multi-cultural initiative. Contact Gigi Raven Wilbur at [bihouse@flash.net](mailto:bihouse@flash.net) or P.O. Box 667041, Houston, TX, 77266 or call BiNet Houston at (713) 467-7031.

BiNet USA will be launching a new section within the BiNet USA newsletter called "The Colors of Cultures." A call for papers will be sent out to different racial and cultural groups for writings which illustrate and celebrate cultural heritage and cultural history. This is an educational project that is designed to disseminate cultural and racial information across cultures, so that we may share, learn, and grow in the richness of the global human race.

A web site will be established as the archive for the collection of papers over time. In this way, this information will be available for BiNet USA members and ally organizations to share in the richness of multi-cultural diversity.

### Sexual Expression -

Sexual expression is very diverse, with as many variations as there are human beings on the planet. Yet in a sex negative culture, the diversity of sexual expression is often hidden from one another and often even from ourselves due to internalized phobias. Sexual expression, as the term implies, is how one expresses oneself sexually, both within sexual acts and outside of sexual activities. It includes how we decorate ourselves in clothing and jewelry to how we relate to a lover.

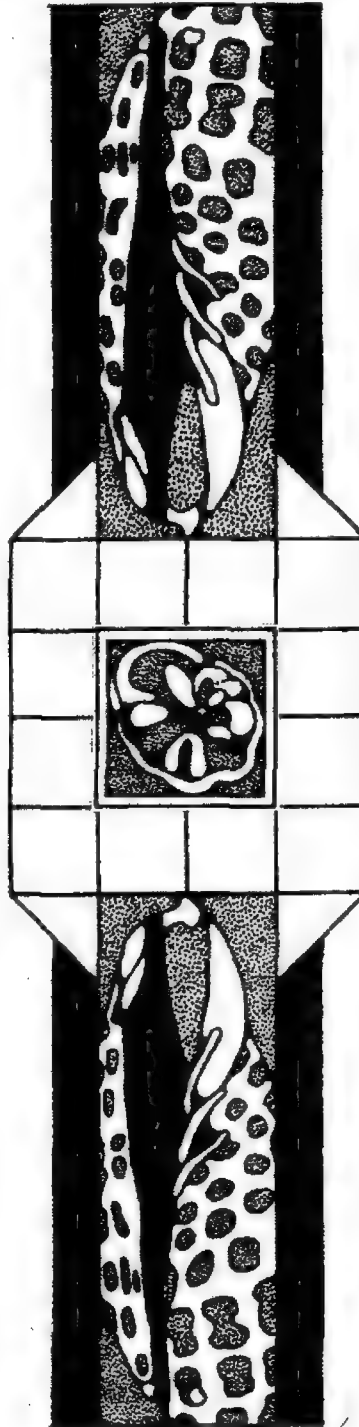
My grandmother gave me some advice when I was a teenager. She stated, "No matter what form love takes, if it is love, it is good. Love is always love, in whatever form it takes and it comes from the heart." Love can and does take many different forms. As with love, there are different forms of sexual expression. Sexuality can include sensuality or be separate. Sexuality can include romantic involvement or be separate. There can be commitment and emotional

involvement, or sex can take the form of mutual gratification without deep connections between partners. Sexuality can take the form of intense body stimulation or remain a genital to genital contact only. Whatever form, there is not a right or a wrong. There is also not a "normal" form of love. I find it helpful to distinguish what forms provide mutual pleasure and what forms do not within my personal space.

I also find that I have different needs for different forms at different times. Depending on environment and situation, depending on the mood of my partner(s) and me, and depending on desires of my partner(s) and me; all have an impact on determining appropriate sexual expression.

Whatever "normal" human sexual behavior is, it is outside the parameters of accurate measurement. At best, it is something that is presumed and that is far from the truth and, furthermore, begs the question.

NOTE: For those interested in developing, adding, or editing the complete position paper on diversity, contact Gigi Raven Wilbur. This version has been edited for space considerations for the BiNet News.



## Bend Over Boyfriend 2: More Rockin' Less Talkin'

"We wanted people to see that all kinds of folks love anal sex, do it different ways and in combination with other kinds of sex," says Jackie Strano, who created and directed the two "Bend Over Boyfriend" videos with Shar Rednour.

For over a year, the original "Bend Over Boyfriend" (BOB) video has remained on Good Vibrations international mail order top 10 bestseller list. Currently, it sells second only to the renown vibrator, the Hitachi Magic Wand. BOB instructs women how to strap on dildos and pleasure their male partners anally; it teaches men how to ask for and receive that pleasure.

The new BOB 2 actually shows couples living out their fantasies. There's a mechanic who pops open his beer, sits down on his old lady's dick and fucks her tits. Or the street whore who turns the tables on a cop. Carol Queen teaches a fan how to fuck her boytoy and has to get into the action herself.

The only "pro" in the movie is Chloe. She plays a beach-loving girlfriend with amateur Jack Manx. Among the amateurs were Keith Bowers and Daphne; Keith wrote about his experience in an article in the *Spectator* ([www.spectator.net](http://www.spectator.net)). Keith wrote, "As a budding bisexual and recent convert to anal play, I wanted to help as many guys as possible see the light. It was an exhibitionist's dream. We were fucking. Seven women were watching and recording us. It felt so wicked. So naughty. So right."

For more information, see the web site at [www.sirvideo.com](http://www.sirvideo.com) or call (415) 978-0891.

## Creating Change: Forging an Understanding

by Kris Roehling

By now, I've had a few opportunities to muddle through the mosaic of experiences at this year's Creating Change but I'm still overwhelmed. However, I do want to write to all of you while I'm still feeling the feelings of that weekend.

In preparing for our visibility at Creating Change this year, someone challenged me on our high level of participation and effort around this one event. One of the thoughts was that by focusing all our energies on a conference for the queer community we would have less energy for supporting and being visible at non-queer conferences. At the time I could not articulate an answer about why it was important for me to attend and why I believed it was important for BiNet USA to be visible at this event. I had no idea what I was going to find at CC. Maybe it \*would\* be just a big flop. But I did know three things:

1. Each of my previous attendances at Creating Change had provided me with transformative experiences.
2. My primary lessons from CC's past were around forging alliances and building bridges between formerly separate groups.
3. Since this year's conference was being hosted in Oakland, there would be a rather large group of Bi folks there...I wanted to -- indeed, I felt I needed to -- connect with them.

Creating Change is restorative for me. I find even though I work many long hours at every conference, I also come away feeling renewed and re-energized. Most importantly, I am filled again with hope and a vision of possibilities.

But in the weeks before the conference I could not articulate that depth of experience. By October of 1999, I had remembered the experiences of other CC's but did not remember what led up to

those events. There was no way for me to answer the question, "What will happen this year that is so important?" My resources were low. I could not remember, but I had an agnostic's version of faith.

I began having epiphanies within the first few hours of my first institute. However, it was not until about half way through the weekend that I realized that Creating Change isn't the best queer conference that I've attended, it's one of the best social justice conferences I've ever attended. I don't consider myself the most experienced activist -- I'm certainly not in the same league as many of the Bi Community Icons -- but I \*am\* a conference junkie. Creating Change is a conference firmly based in supporting social justice by supporting and training activists from a wide cross-section of constituencies. They do this by bringing us all together for the process.

Creating Change brings together people who are different: different sexual orientations, relationship structures, races, cultures, abilities, genders and ages. Different economic levels together with different economic philosophies. People who identify as radicals and others who are conservative. And almost none of these differences are either/or. No, bisexuals find themselves in a virtual sea of people with other interests who have also been seen as "in-between".

But with all these differences, almost all of the individuals who come to Creating

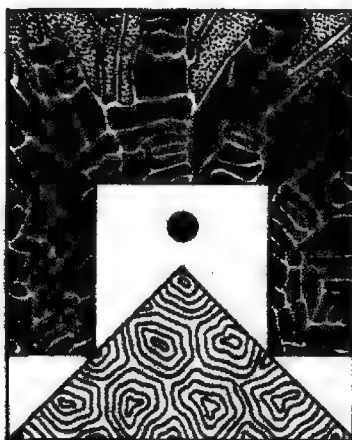
Change do have one thing in common. They are articulate and opinionated, and they can hear the sound of an "ism" dropping from across the room of the largest of plenary halls. Since they are activists, they get to practice their skills of organizing right there on the spot!

All this is to say that from my perspective, Creating Change is not about networking with other gay, lesbian, Bisexual and transgendered organizations. It's about meeting all of those people who are different. It's about forging an understanding between us and about building the foundations of bridges that will be crossed many times in the future.

My first workshop was a pre-conference institute for "GLBT workers in non-queer movements." the presenters were also active in the Cuban Movement, the Labor Union Movement the women's movement and countless others. As they began the day, they shared with us their assumptions about oppression and about participants in the program for today. I believe that these assumptions are consistent with what I have heard from NGLTF and from all the work of the policy institute.

The system of oppression is pervasive. While each type of oppression interacts with and gains strength from with other types, each one is also a complete system in itself. If one oppression were to disappear, the others would not disappear.

After a few introductions, the rest of the day was facilitated discussions among the 70 or so activists in the room. In the small groups I participated in, I was amazed to be encircled by so many activists with progressive anti-oppression stances. In Florida, I have there is a small band of people who seem to speak the same language. Almost none of them are from the queer community. But at CC, my first day, here I am, in a room of 70 or so activists....not queers, activists. Okay, so we were queers too, and many queers first. But there were people in that room who bleed Union, or are fighting blatant -yet clueless - racism or able-ism in their queer organizations. No one I met that day even questioned the idea that our oppressions were connected.



And the theme continued....

This may sound strange, but no where else do I hear about more racism, able-ism, bi/trans phobia, sexism etc. etc. than at Crating Change, and I love it. Because do you know what that means? It means there is a community of people who are paying attention. It's not just 5 of us in Orlando. It's 2,000 of us in Oakland. And we're not just policing the police, as we did thanks to Tim Turner and some other youth / gender / people of color activists (more on that later) but we're watching each other. We're calling each other on our own shit. And why? Because until we address our own "isms", we cannot be effective allies.

In a feminist workshop, separatist lesbians were challenged on the notion that a person who is a lesbian is more a feminist than any other type of woman. In bisexual workshops, bi leaders were challenged about our use of language, and if using labels at all, created unnecessary boxes. Anti-right people were challenged by that conservative Christians are capable of anything but hate. And the best part was that someone came back to the table and talked about it. By the time someone got to the table they were either so mad or so excited that they just had to process it with someone. Rarely was I the only or even the primary person, but I was there.

Radical people getting together, finding our difference, and our similarities and forging alliances. \*That's\* why I go to Creating Change...oh that and the Training and something exciting always happens to stir things up.

This year, our (BiNet's) beloved Tim Turner was out just walking around late at night with others from the conference. They came upon a scene of police harassment of transgender people and people of color. A transgendered male to female prostitute had been attacked in a fight on a corner. She and her friends were also all people of color. She had been cut on her hands and arms with a bottle. Two officers were interviewing her with respect and dignity. In the mean time a white officer (the other two were of color) was berating her friends, calling them names, scolding them for being on the corner and complaining about the

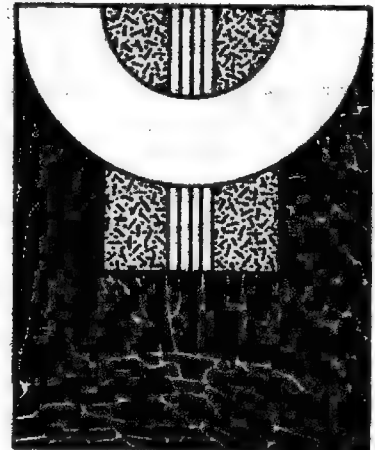
paperwork. Tim and his friends stayed to witness the event. They wrote up their experience and in the morning took the information to NGLTF. They had a meeting at 2 p.m. At 6 p.m. there were hundreds in my opinion, about 700) people in front of the Oakland City Police Department demanding an investigation.

And the training....did I mention the training? This year, NGLTF started an activist workout training program. Have you heard of that full-day media training that GLAAD gives. You haven't been able to attend it yet? See it at creating Change. A full day of training about organizational development and fundraising from the Gill foundation. Participate in it at Creating Change. Want to learn how to develop leaders, or better yet develop yourself as a leader? Go to the all-day work out for leadership development at Creating Change.

Besides in the name of GLAAD, not once in that entire paragraph did I use the work queer, gay, lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender to describe the content of a workshop. The workshops are focused on training activists. I don't know about you, but these courses were never offered at my university. Of course, I've not attended universities at any of the Big Cities.

So Creating Change is more than a Queer Conference. It is a weekend dedicated to social change and social justice. It is a place for activists working in the areas of race, culture, labor, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, poverty, age, youth, and countless other areas to come together, to present their ideas and to work out their difference. In the meantime, it is also a place of exciting events and you can get some really awesome training for yourself and for the newer activists in your organization.

Hope to see you next year in Atlanta!



As a child, everything enlightened  
 Joy elated the soul,  
 Sadness disturbed to the core.  
 In the extremes was comfort.

.... Born, Seeking

Growing,  
 Sensory stimulation creates bias  
 Happiness from knowledge  
 Fear of difference.  
 In conflict much confusion.

.... Closed, Asleep

Education,  
 A quest for answers,  
 Oppression breeds repression  
 Diversity necessitates unity  
 Realization is troubling

.... Moving, Changing

Create,  
 Dismantle constructs  
 Visualize, conceptualize, utilize  
 The strength and fear of  
 Potential

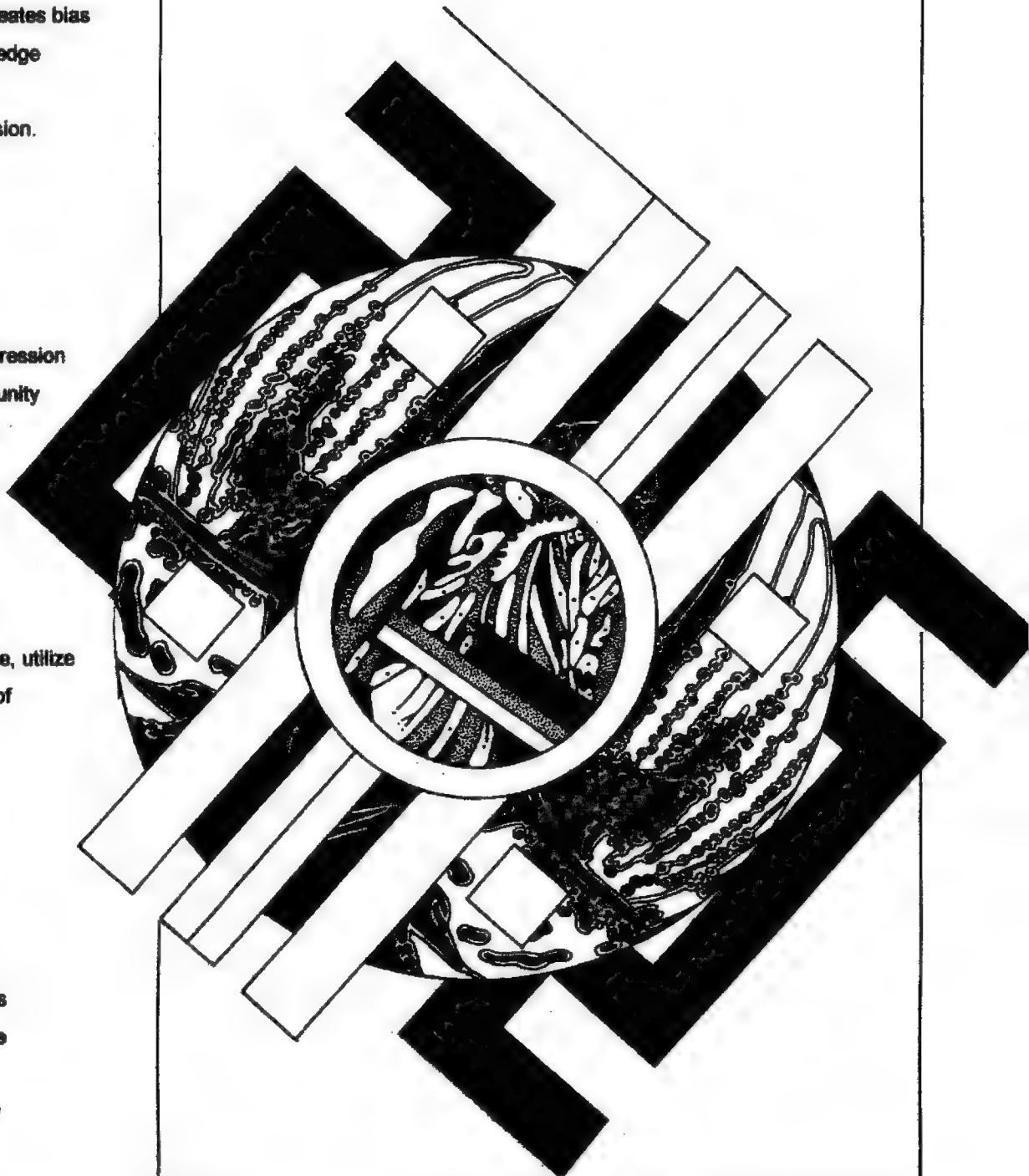
.... Awake, Alert

Force,  
 Barriers broken,  
 Solutions emerging  
 Inconceivable territories  
 New frontiers of change

.... Forward, Tomorrow

## A Journey of Awakening thus far ...

by Timothy Turner, 1999



## Taking (it) Off in the New Millennium

by Sue S.

A couple of years ago, I attended a mask-making workshop. The mask I designed was a mix of red, silver and black papers and represented a snake shedding its skin. Perhaps my subconscious knew that I was on a path that would bring much change. Change has come as I have dared to face fears and live with greater integrity and self-love. During the past 18 months I have moved out of a 10-year marriage and into my first same-sex relationship. This was a major letting go of the social status and standing of heterosexual privilege. At times, I feared that a giant foot might descend from the sky and stomp me for my arrogance.

I faced the milestone of coming out to my parents as bisexual and introducing them to my new partner. I will always appreciate their respectful listening as I told my story and their openness in meeting the new people in my life. I have also felt the frustration of their subsequent attempts to ignore my new relationship, as if that will make it go away. My new lover is polyamorous and has other partners. Exposure to polyamory has helped me to vision the ending of marriage as a transition. I was able to resist taking on the role of a victim and have developed a close, comfortable family-like relationship with my husband and his new lover. Much of this change occurred without the security of predictable social

support, as friends were easily overwhelmed by the complexity and unconventionality of my life choices. I received little (though some) outright rejection and criticism. More commonly, people distanced themselves or expressed "concern". This has been one of the more difficult, unanticipated, and painful aspects of this time.

As I hang in there, I have found that some people eventually come around. This past September, it was a great joy to be able to host a party that was attended by my lover, my former husband, his new lover and many of our mutual friends. When I have the courage to share openly about my life, I experience a wonderful freeing of energy. Listeners often respond by opening up about surprising secrets of their own. I am currently out to all of my close friends and family and to a couple of co-workers. In the coming year, I intend to widen the circle. I continue to gradually take the risk to speak the truth about my life, even as I realize that much of the world would rather that I remain silent.

I do so because I believe that we are all so much more interesting than the "socially acceptable" image that we project. As we enter a new millennium, I want to help create a world where everyone is free to explore, experiment, change and be fully themselves - with pride. I can start by extending that freedom to myself. By opening up, I can share my vision and encourage others to live consciously.

I also plan to do more exploring. I have become "poly-curious" and have been getting to know others with a sense of openness to let relationships develop and "find their level." I recently went out with a man and experienced a whole variety of feelings, including discomfort with conditioned sex roles and a thought that it's "cooler" to date women (my own internalized biphobia). I can see that, in getting to know others, I will get to know myself better as well. I value this opportunity, even when the mirror of relationship shows me things in myself that I would rather not see. I want to live with an open heart and with less fear; to be present in all of life's moments.



### Puzzle Solutions:

1. wring King
2. Bowie's joeys
3. bonnie Lani
4. Meshell's seashells
5. sign Klein
6. capture "Rapture"
7. Freddie's teddies
8. Cause laws
9. Camille appeal
10. Rock's socks

Wordy Gurdy: Shakespeare



BiNet USA 4201 Wilson Blvd. #110-311 Arlington, VA 22203

## What is BiNet USA?

BiNet USA is the oldest and largest national Bisexual organization in the USA. Our mission is to collect and distribute information regarding Bisexuality; to facilitate the development of Bisexual community and visibility; to work for the equal rights of all oppressed peoples; and to eradicate all forms of oppression inside and outside the Bisexual community. We are committed to being affirmatively inclusive of a multicultural constituency and political agenda. Becoming a member of BiNet USA is an opportunity to join with others who share your vision of a Bi-friendly world, and who recognize the value and power of a vibrant national political action organization of Bisexuals and Bi-friendly supporters. We have a great future ahead of us, and we look forward to welcoming you to our ranks.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Is discretion necessary? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Join on a 12 month membership at these levels and get these exciting benefits!

All membership levels enable the member to vote in elections and business meetings, plus they receive a yearly subscription to BiNet News!

- ☐ \$45
- ☐ \$40
- ☐ \$35
- ☐ \$30
- ☐ \$25
- ☐ \$20
- ☐ \$10
- ☐ Other \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$1 for every \$1000 income is suggested)

Mail to: BiNet USA, 4201 Wilson Blvd. #110-311, Arlington, VA 22203

## Volunteer Here

by Tim Turner

BiNet USA is completely volunteer-based organization working by and for its membership and constituents. We have a wide array of opportunities for you to participate in the progressive social justice work of BiNet USA. You may be asking yourself a few questions. How can I do volunteer work from my geographical location? What if I don't have that much time? If I am not involved all the time, what do I have to contribute?

Many of these questions are easily answered. BiNet USA has organizers all over the country in geographical locations from rural to urban areas. If you have a phone and/or email account you can participate on a committee doing social justice for the liberation of our membership and constituents. Time is not an issue. If you have at least 5 hours a month you would like to donate to BiNet USA, you have a wide range of opportunities to get involved. The time you donate is yours. Most of the volunteer areas of BiNet USA are not leadership positions. Although our Regional Organizers and National Coordinators are vital to the day to day functioning of BiNet USA, our volunteers on the committees and special projects are the fuel and fire which move our organization forward.

Now that we have the easily answered questions out of the way, what are the many ways you can get involved? The BiNet USA has several initiatives, working groups and committees with various roles available.

### Ally Campaign

BiNet USA's effort to align itself with other organizations, particularly in the Gay and Lesbian community, who share the same commitments to ending discrimination.

**Wanted:** Ally Campaign Leader

### Bi-visibility & Multicultural Initiative (Gigi Raven Wilbur, bihouse@flash.net)

To ensure a multicultural agenda and leadership through diversity in and of spirituality, relationship models, ability, class, age, culture, race, ethnicity, gender variance, sexual orientation, and sexual expression.

**Wanted:** Committee Members

### Education Initiative

To expand the outreach and effectiveness of BiNet USA through the Internet and other technologies.

**Wanted:** Initiative Leader and Committee Members

### Funding Working Group

(Timothy Turner, turner@binetusa.org)  
An umbrella group working over three specific areas of funding for BiNet USA:

- 1) Grants (Melissa White) - develop strategies, collect information, and submit grant applications based on our current projects
- 2) Large Donors (not staffed) - strategize ways to attract large donors, through establishing dialogue, making connections, presenting BiNet USA, and soliciting the funding of BiNet USA projects.
- 3) Direct Mail Campaign (Kris Roehling) - strategize goals, develop paper presentations, and solicit funding through direct mail

**Wanted:** Large Donor Campaign Leader, Committee Members

### Media and Visibility Working Group (Timothy Turner, turner@binetusa.org)

An umbrella group working over three specific areas of media and visibility for BiNet USA.

- 1) Media (Timothy Turner) - Discuss media outlets opportunities develop strategies, collect information, submit proposals, establish dialogue, make connections, and present BiNet USA to media outlets.
- 2) Editors (Robin Renee) - Edit all press work coming from BiNet USA, provide suggestions and opportunities to the media group.

3) Visibility (Timothy Turner) - Discuss creative opportunities to present BiNet USA through conference participation, liaison opportunities, and visibility projects about bisexuality, bisexuals and our culture.

**Wanted:** Committee Members

### Technology and Resource Initiative (TRT) (Jon Spinner, jspinner@binetusa.org)

To expand the outreach and effectiveness of BiNet USA through the internet and other technologies.

**Wanted:** Web Team volunteers and Committee Members

### Rural Initiative (Deborah Dixon, morigel@mindspring.com)

To improve the distribution of information about Bisexuality to those areas not usually served by city-based organizations.

**Wanted:** Committee members

### Youth Initiative

To reach out to young people who are struggling with their identity, to let them know that they are not alone, and that there is someplace safe near them where they can get assistance and information.

**Wanted:** Initiative Leader and Committee Members

See an area you find interesting? Jump in right away! Every voice brings a new perspective to our social justice work. Contact the coordinator next to the area, or contact me directly at turner@binetusa.org or at 317-328-1512 for more details. If you are unable to volunteer time, but want to make sure your voice is included in the discussions, please contact any of the leaders to submit your ideas and suggestions at any time.

## Bi Focus: A Bisexual Look at the Entertainment World

By Michael Szymanski

It's been a banner year for bisexuals in film. Oh, no one actually said the B-word in 1999, but "Bisexuality" actually did make an appearance in many mainstream movies (music, TV and theater) — all you have to do is take a closer look.

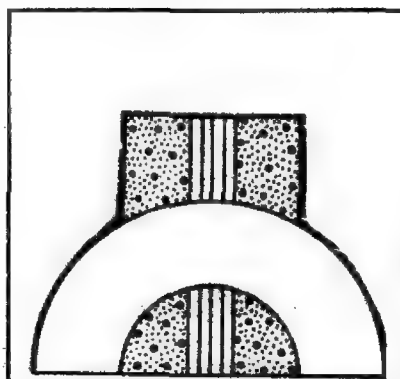
Fear of actually using the B-word in entertainment is going to change, according to a psychic friend of mine who says that the year 2000 will make the world consciousness more aware of duality. (It's because of the 2, you see.) Yet, even though the idea that folks can have an interest in both sexes is sneaking into our entertainment, scriptwriters still seem hesitant to type out the word.

Most recently, Matthew Perry's girlfriend matter-of-factly mentions her girl-girl past in "Three to Tango." The playwright played by Hank Azaria in Tim Robbins' "Cradle Will Rock" is based on a real-life bi guy Marc Blitzstein. The Cameron Diaz character in "Being John Malkovich" turns out to like women as well as men, and in "Dogma" the ultra-cool skirt-chasing Jason Mewes just shrugs his shoulders and smirks when he's outed as thinking about guys while he's jacking off.

Characters coming into contact with their bi sides were also explored in "Happy, Texas," "Breakfast of Champions," "The Fight Club," "The Adventures of Sebastian Cole," "Cruel Intentions" and the Oscar-contender "Boys Don't Cry" where a girl who does some gender mind-fucking makes characters analyze their own definition of sexuality.

Maybe all this happening is a reflection of the unpredictable times we live in. Who'd have thought that once-queer cinema darling Gregg Araki would move in with a girl, and has cast her in his most accessible film to date: "Splendor" about two guys and a girl all in love with each other in a perfect (well, not always perfect) three-way relationship. Like in his past films such as "Nowhere" and "The Living End" all the young characters have sexuality best defined as "whatever," and that is reflected this year in lots of hip small youth-oriented films like "Relax, It's Just Sex," "The Imposters," "Totally Confused," "200 Cigarettes," "Jeanne and the Perfect Guy," "Dry Cleaning," "Go" and "The Velocity of Gary," where a bisexual porn star is the lead character.

Perhaps the best bi movie of the year is by bisexual filmmaker Hilary Brougher whose sci-fi-bi time travel film "The Sticky Fingers of Time" has everyone in it as cool, free, good-looking, bi — oh, and killers, too. In "Get Real" the lead teen goes out to a park bathroom and tricks with a married man and later falls into bed (and love) with the leading jock in school who has a girl on the side. In "Head On," the lead character thinks he may be bisexual, so he tries to get it on with a girl, but gives up and goes off with other closeted men who are also trying to feign straighthood. And, in "Trick" there's a hysterical rant by a topless woman about "a whole section in Paris where everyone is bisexual."



Even in the period film "Plunkett and MacLeane," there's a line about swinging both ways; Rupert Everett is a bi man in "B. Monkey" and Nicole Kidman explores her wild bi side in "Eyes Wide Shut." And, Steve Martin insists it's not true, but it seems that when the leading sexpot female in his film "Bowfinger" starts dating Hollywood's best-known lesbian in order to get ahead in her career, it's making a not-so-vague reference to Steve's bi ex-girlfriend Anne Heche.

On television, look for more bi characters than Det. Bayliss on "Homicide." Neve Campbell's character on "Party of Five," will go in a bi direction, and so will characters on "Dawson's Creek," "Roswell" and "Will and Grace."

In theater, "Cabaret" is still the big hit on Broadway, and it's more bi than the movie was. "Shooting Porn," "Chain of Desire," "Labor Pains," "Close to Glenn" and "Burning Habits" also were premiered plays with bi themes.

In music there's always bi folk: George Michael, Tom Robinson, Mick Jagger, Prince, Ani DiFranco, Melissa Ethridge, Elton John, Boy George, David Bowie, Liberace and even John Lennon who warned, "lock up your daughters — and sons" when he's around.

Biographies had an emphasis on the Bi in 1999. Vincent Price's daughter outed her father and her stepmother as bisexuals, Noel Coward's plays were analyzed as a reflection of his bi life, the Judy Garland bio has two pages devoted to her bisexuality and Rudolf Nureyev's dalliances with both genders is detailed in his latest biography — including an affair with Robert Kennedy.

Larry Kramer gave a speech describing an affair between Abraham Lincoln and a shopkeeper.

named Joshua Speed, private letters were published about the male and female lovers of surrealist artist Salvador Dali and "Shakespeare in Love" director John Madden declares the Bard of Avon was "at the very least bisexual."

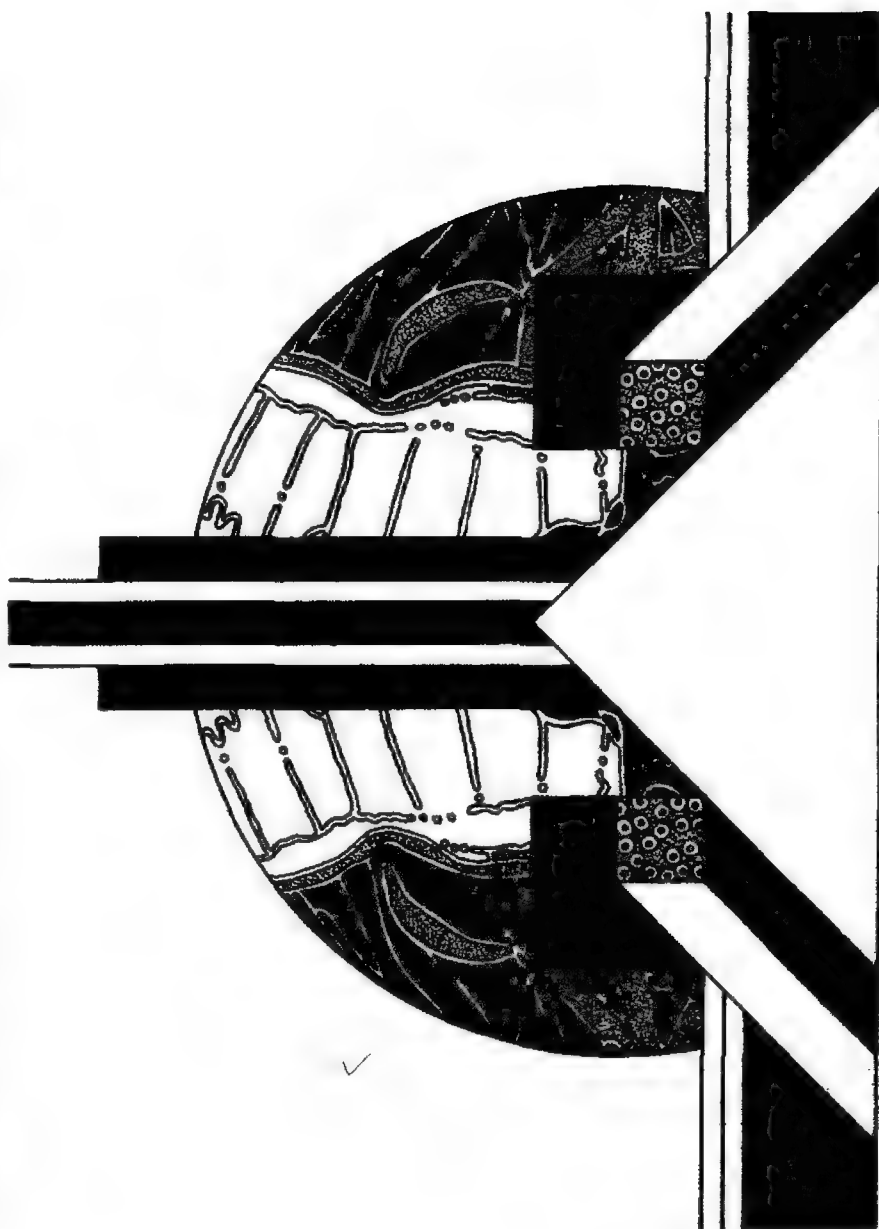
Novelist and lesbian poet Jan Clausen confirmed she unexpectedly fell in love with a man. Many of singer Dusty Springfield's obits mentioned her bisexuality, and "Playgirl" Man of the Year Brian Buzzini is rumored to be bisexual. Marv Albert wants to have sex with a man and woman together reports the Village Voice, Jean-Claud Van Damme's wife says in divorce papers that he fools around with guys report the tabloids, and Robert Downey Jr. talks about fooling around with men.

Andy Dick, Michael Stipe, Courtney Love, Drew Barrymore, Ally Sheedy, Stephen Sondheim, publisher Jann Wenner all talked more about their bisexual leanings in interviews this past year. Jason Flemyng, ("Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels" and "The Red Violin") living with an actress, talks about being interested in both sexes, and John Wesley Shipp is said to have dumped Rod Jackson (of Bob and Rod fame) for a fling with an actress.

And just recently the actress behind "Will and Grace" supervixen Karen, the lovely Megan Mullally, told The Advocate that she's bisexual. And, the whole cast just announced they are doing an unprecedented political spot for the anti-gay Knight Initiative in California.

Read the latest "Bi Focus" column on the Planet Out web site:  
[www.planetout.com/people/columns/szymanski/](http://www.planetout.com/people/columns/szymanski/)

Feedback on the column goes to:  
[www.planetout.com/feedback/](http://www.planetout.com/feedback/)



**BiNet USA**  
**1999 4th Quarter**  
**Financial report**  
**October 1 - December 31, 1999**

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

Restricted Contributions	\$1,100.00
Fundraising Events	\$1,285.00
Legacies & Bequests	\$21,834.80
Membership Dues	<u>\$3,255.00</u>

Total Income                      \$27,474.80

Expense

Administration

Basic Phone	\$27.96
Pass-Through	<u>\$10,917.42</u>
Total Administration	\$10,945.38

BiNet News

Mailing	\$1,000.00
Printing	<u>\$400.00</u>
Total BiNet News	\$1,400.00

Fundraising Events                      \$361.49

Visibility

Conference Literature	\$54.30
Pride Tables and Booth	\$150.00
Media	<u>-</u>
Total Visibility	\$204.30

Regional Support

South Central Region                      \$2,180.00

Total Expense                      \$15,091.17

Net Income                      \$12,383.63



## Bisexual Visibility

by Kris Roehling

Members and leaders of our network have been busy raising banners, distributing literature and telling everyone that biphobia makes them BLUE!

As you might guess, all that visibility does not just happen on good looks and lots of effort. Unfortunately, there are some things that we simply must pay cash for. Below, you'll find some highlights of the past year.

### Equality Begins at Home; March on the State Capitols -

The National Gay and Lesbian Task force organized this massive march in April of 1999. Bisexuals were out and visible at events all across the country. Bi banners, stickers, t-shirts and bi people were prominent pictorial features in mainstream and gay and lesbian press. This Year BiNet USA teamed up with Michael Page and the BiCafe and invested in some banners and stickers for this event. The overall cost? About \$700.

What did we get for our investment of time and energy? Well besides the visibility, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force honored BiNet USA as "The Most Effective Regional Network in the Nation." In the words of Rebecca at the closing plenary at Creating Change, "They were in the big cities, they came from the small towns, they had banners, they had t-shirts, they were everywhere!" And we all had a great time re-connecting through this event

### Meetings, Retreats, Conferences and Events

Several regions and the national organization held meetings this year. At national conferences like Creating Change, folks organized various receptions to meet, greet and raise

funds while we were all together. People traveled across many miles and state lines this year to meet other bi folk in Arizona, Texas, Minnesota, New Jersey, California, Kansas, Florida and other states.

Participants have reported that they've gone to playful workshops, organizing workshops, conducted business meetings, had grreat parties and even had some spiritual transformations. The regional and national meetings this year cost between \$1,000 and \$2,500 each. Most broke even or had a small profit.

Small fund raising events around the country raised anywhere between \$100 to \$1,300. Those monies were directed to the general funds and were used for many of the following items.

### BiNet News

Each quarterly newsletter of BiNet USA costs about \$1,400 to print and mail to it's members. Another \$200 is spent shipping to leaders who distribute the newsletter at national and regional conferences around the country.

### Administration

BiNet USA spends an average of \$1,000 a year on maintaining a mailbox, forwarding mail, and other shipping costs. BiNet USA pays for basic telephone service and conference calls among committee leaders or NC's about 7 or 8 times a year. The cost adds up to over \$1,000.

### Conference Visibility

We have mass produced educational literature, distributed pride stickers, unfurled banners on large walls and across our information booth at conferences. The total cost this year for Visibility has been about \$1,300.

### Media Visibility

More and more organizations and the media are turning to BiNet USA for information about bisexuality, to find the perspectives of individual bisexuals, and to stand with allies. BiNet USA leaders have been invited to sit on the National Policy Roundtable and National Media Roundtable. We have been contacted by Glamour Magazine, ABC, CBS, CNN, the Washington Blade, and other media.

The cost for these expense items totaled about \$700. Compared to the level of work and the pay off in visibility, the cost has been minimal.

### What we weren't able to do:

Each leader paid for any long distance calls they made, except for conference calls. Only 3 or 4 leaders (out of 30) were assisted with their massive travel expenses. Though we paid for many printing costs, many more copies were paid for by BiNet leaders in the middle of their conferences.

**Next year we want to purchase** calling cards for Regional Organizers and committee leaders, attend and be wildly visible at 30 national and regional conferences of GLBT and other progressive groups around the USA, send delegations to global events, distribute the Bisexual Organizer's Organizing Manual to every Affiliate bi group of BiNet USA, distribute thousands of pieces of educational literature, and hire staff!

We need your help! BiNet USA is a tool for everyone. If you cannot participate in the networking, in the organizing, in the meetings, then help support and hire those who do have the time and energy to educate people about bisexuality. Thank you, everyone for your continued support of this network. We have accomplished so much that now there's even more to be done!

## Gray by Wendy Curry

Black and white,

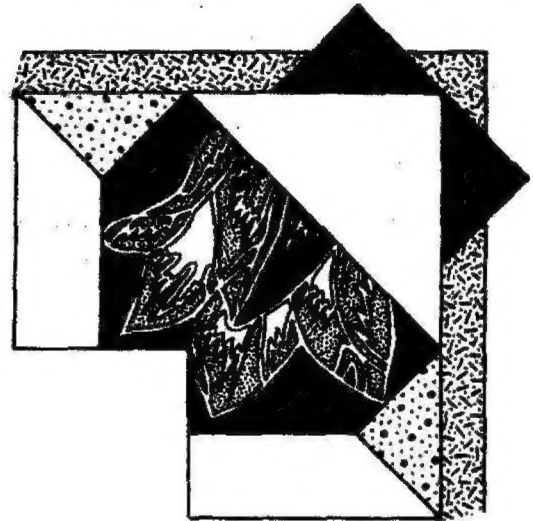
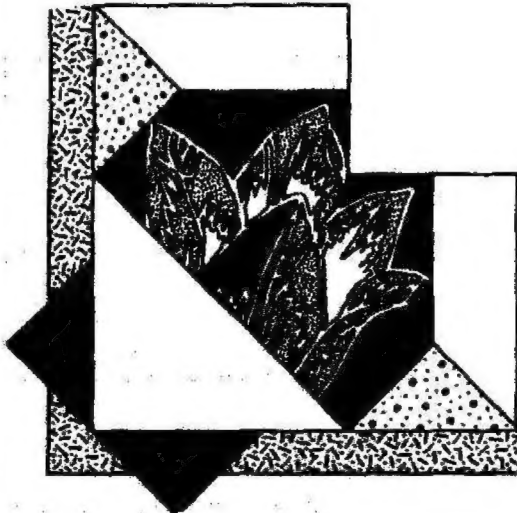
Both, neither, something else.

The complete absence of light merges with light  
and sires everything else.

Shadows

Black and white can report the news,  
but gray can illustrate the event.

Reality is not in the extremes,  
but in the million shades in the middle.  
The grays.



Sexuality is not in the male/female choice

Its in the shades of gray.

Who turns you on?

Who melts your heart?

Who turns your head?

Who do you want to see when you wake up in the  
morning?

Who do you dream about?

If you were stuck on a desert isle...?

Since individuals are not just genders,  
how can our attractions be explained  
solely with back and white?

Reality is not in the extremes,  
but in the million shades in the middle.

Additions and Corrections of Periodical Records

Title Bi Net News

City Arlington State VA Current \_\_\_\_\_

Box # \_\_\_\_\_ Previous Box(es) # \_\_\_\_\_

Preceded By \_\_\_\_\_

Succeeded By \_\_\_\_\_

Date of First Issue (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Current Holdings (issue/volume numbers) 1996 - Win, Spr, Sum

1997 - Win, Spr - Sum

1997-98 - Fall - Win

1998 - Winter, Fall

1999 - Fall

2000 - Jan

Audience (circle one): Gay Lesbian Mixed Other

Subjects (see subject list) Bi (newsletter)

Bisexual Network of the USA

"BiNet News." BiNet News., Jan. 2000, p. [1]. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/ZWWPDU392687283/AHSI?u=ubcolumbia&sid=bookmark-AHSI](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/ZWWPDU392687283/AHSI?u=ubcolumbia&sid=bookmark-AHSI). Accessed 30 Dec. 2024.